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Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Monday, 4 November 1991, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. POCAR

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

SUBMISSION OF REPORTS BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 40 OF THE COVENANT (agenda item 3)

1. Mrs. KLEIN (Secretary of the Committee) said that, since it had prepared its summary of the situation regarding the submission of reports in September, the secretariat had received three more reports; the initial report of Burundi, the second periodic report of Afghanistan and the third periodic report of Hungary. The secretariat had also received a note from Venezuela, dated 21 October, informing the Committee that an interdepartmental working group had been set up in order to prepare the long overdue report of Venezuela. Venezuela had informed the Committee that it planned to submit its report by the end of the year, and asked whether it could be regarded as a combined second and third report. Similar requests to submit combined reports had been made by Madagascar and the United Republic of Tanzania.

2. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee might consider whether the practice that had been adopted in the case of Iraq, of asking a country to submit a special report in respect of a particular situation, should be extended to other countries. The experience with Iraq had been positive, as it had allowed the Committee to address an emergency situation. Although States were not normally willing to submit reports during emergencies, Iraq had submitted its report within the deadline set by the Committee, which had been able to take it up at its previous session. He felt that the practice of requesting special reports should not remain an isolated one, merely attributable to the unanimity within the international community regarding the situation prevailing in Iraq, but that it should be extended and taken as a precedent that could be applied to other countries.

3. Mr. EL SHAFEI said that allowing combined reports might be a means of dealing with the far too frequent situation of overdue reports. In his view, the Committee could accept such requests, although it should not in advance request a combined report from a country. However, if a country's second and third periodic reports were overdue, it could accept a combined report in order to come to terms with the situation. Regarding the Chairman's suggestion that the procedure adopted in respect of Iraq should be extended, he said that such an approach might be appropriate if a State's report was overdue and if an emergency situation obtained in the country.

4. Mr. SADI stated that in view of the rapid changes taking places throughout the world, the whole reporting process needed to be reviewed. At a time of unprecedented upheaval, the reporting process appeared too slow to keep track of change, and had to be accelerated. The Committee should establish criteria for deciding which countries it was to spur into submitting reports. It should not confine its interest to emergency situations, as there were regions, such as Eastern Europe, where probing by the Committee was necessary, even in the absence of emergency situations.

5. Mr. MAVROMMATIS recalled that the question of combined reports had already been raised the previous summer. It was unrealistic, if a country had been six years late in submitting its initial report, to expect it to provide a second report within a year. The Committee had to weigh its rules of

procedure against practical considerations. He suggested that from the second periodic report onwards, the Committee could decide to accept a report as a combined report, provided that it was complete enough.

6. Mr. LALLAH drew attention to the need to accelerate the submission of reports by some States. He expressed concern about the position regarding the former German Democratic Republic, whose third periodic report had been submitted two years previously but had not been considered. He wondered whether the Committee should not ask the Government of Germany to submit a report on the new situation in the former German Democratic Republic.

7. Mr. FODOR said that he, too, was convinced of the importance of extending to other countries and regions the practice that had been adopted for Iraq. It would be unjust if it were applied only to Iraq. In view of the emergency situation in Yugoslavia, he would be in favour of requesting Yugoslavia to submit a report to the Committee at its next session.

8. Mr. WENNERGREN endorsed Mr. Sadi's request for suitable criteria for requesting States to submit reports within a short deadline. Events in the Gulf and Yugoslavia illustrated one situation that might justify such a request. Another was the receipt of alarming information on the human rights situation, as was the case, for example, with the Islamic Republic of Iran. The difficulties experienced in handling communications from Jamaica might also constitute grounds for requesting that a report be submitted by Jamaica to the next session.

9. Mr. AGUILAR URBINA shared Mr. Sadi's preoccupation about the length of the reporting period. He pointed out that if the practice of submitting combined reports became commonplace, the reporting period would in practice be 10 years, thus jeopardizing the monitoring role of the Committee. If Venezuela was allowed to submit a single report after 10 years, there was every reason to expect States to request permission to submit combined reports after 15 or even 20 years. Accordingly, he felt that it would be unwise to accept such a practice, although he agreed that the practice of requesting States to submit specific reports under special circumstances, should be extended.

10. Mr. MAVROMMATIS stressed the need for the Committee to establish objective criteria in order to be able to decide, on an individual basis, whether to accept combined reports. He drew attention to the danger of informing States in advance that the Committee would accept a combined report, and said that he would be unable to countenance such a practice. With regard to the former German Democratic Republic, he endorsed Mr. Lallah's remarks. Where Yugoslavia was concerned, he pointed out that it was difficult for a country at war to submit a report on the human rights situation, and that such a request might be impractical. He understood the motives for asking for a report from Jamaica, but drew attention to the danger of confusing the mandatory reporting requirements under the Covenant with issues relating to communications arising from the Optional Protocol. Lastly, he said that up-to-date information on the situation in the former German Democratic Republic would make it possible to shed light on the situation that had obtained there in the past.

11. Mr. HERNDL pointed out that there were some 14 States parties with two overdue reports, and that no solution was possible unless the States in question were reminded of the need to submit a report as soon as possible. The Islamic Republic of Iran was eight years behind with its second periodic report and three years behind with its third. He acknowledged that combined reports were perhaps the only practical solution, and said that the Committee should focus its efforts on those countries with two reports overdue and draw their attention to their failure to comply with their obligations under the Covenant. Regarding the preparation of reports in respect of emergency situations, the Islamic Republic of Iran was a perfect illustration of a country to which the procedure could be applied.

12. The CHAIRMAN observed that the discussion was addressing two separate points: firstly, how to accelerate submission of reports; and, secondly, how to elaborate on the practice that had been observed with Iraq and to enhance the Committee's effectiveness in emergency situations. A number of suggestions had been made in the latter respect, and he agreed in principle with all of them, but practicalities required that the procedure should be limited. Although he sympathized with Mr. Wennergren's suggestion regarding Jamaica, it was hard as Mr. Mavrommatis had pointed out, to see on what the Committee could base such a step. It was perhaps advisable for the Committee to restrict itself to emergency situations under article 4 of the Covenant, and especially to emergency situations that had not been notified to the Secretary-General. Although the Islamic Republic of Iran was an excellent example of such a country, the Committee might be better advised to ask for a report from a country in another region, in order to demonstrate its concern for human rights in all regions of the world. He cited Yugoslavia, Zaire and Madagascar as examples.

13. With regard to the former German Democratic Republic, it was perhaps inopportune to formally request a special report, as the Federal Republic of Germany had always submitted its reports on time. It might be preferable to draw the attention of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, by a letter from the Chairman, to the desirability of information on the situation in the new Länder, as the third periodic report of the former German Democratic Republic had not been considered, on account of the political changes that had taken place.

14. As far as combined reports were concerned, the question had to be decided on a case-by-case basis: only if a report was satisfactory should the Committee accept it as a combined report. If it failed to meet the Committee's requirements, the Committee could set a new deadline for the following periodic report.

15. Mr. SADI said that greater clarification was required of the criteria to be applied to determine whether a country should be requested to submit an accelerated report. The Committee's stance on the matter was not altogether clear at present, there being some doubt as to whether the existence of an emergency situation or the commission of gross violations of human rights should be the deciding factor. The Islamic Republic of Iran and Yugoslavia have been mentioned as suitable countries for such a procedure. Perhaps the Soviet Union might also be considered, in view of the very recent suspension there of newly-won freedoms to meet an emergency economic situation.

16. Mr. PRADO VALLEJO said he did not think it would be appropriate to ask Jamaica for an accelerated report. The communications under consideration in the context of the Optional Protocol would be outside the purview of such a report. Furthermore, since few final decisions had been made by the Committee on the Jamaican cases there was little or no information on Jamaica's reaction to such decisions. Jamaica was a working democracy with a functioning legal system; although it had problems, they were not such as to require a special report from that country. Although Germany, which apparently would prefer not to submit its next report before the due date of 1993, did have social and economic problems following reunification of the country, they did not affect human rights. It was thus not appropriate to ask Germany for a report at present. Further, he concurred with Mr. Mavrommatis that it would be inadvisable to request an accelerated report from Yugoslavia while it was unclear exactly what was happening there. Although Zaire too was experiencing difficulties, he considered they were not as severe as had been the case with Iraq and did not justify a request for a special report. The criteria for requesting a special report should be those that had applied in the case of Iraq. Otherwise the normal report procedure should be followed.

17. However, despite the fact that it belonged to a region from which a recent special report had been requested, the Islamic Republic of Iran would be a suitable country for such a request since it had not appeared before the Committee for a considerable time and was known to have human rights problems.

18. The CHAIRMAN said, in clarification of his earlier comment, that his sole objection to requesting an accelerated report from the Islamic Republic of Iran had been that it would be preferable not to give the impression that the Committee was focusing on only one region in the world. The Islamic Republic of Iran was only one of a dozen or so countries with human rights problems whose reports were overdue, thus justifying a request for a special report. Kenya, for example, was one such country. The question in fact was which of the countries eligible for the purpose should be asked for a special report in view of the fact that the Committee could only deal with one such report per session.

19. Mr. MYULLERSON said that two countries might be asked to submit special reports for consideration at the Committee's sessions in March and July 1992. The Committee should bear in mind that reports took time to prepare. However, he concurred with the view that the Committee should take time to consider countries with special problems in addition to examining regular reports.

20. Germany was a special case, since the report of the German Democratic Republic had been submitted to the Committee but not considered. It would be appropriate for the Committee, through its Chairman, to request the German Government for a special report in view of the fact that the Committee had been unable to review the situation in the five Länder concerned at the proper time.

21. He did not think it realistic to expect to obtain a report from Yugoslavia in view of present circumstances there. The Soviet Union was a different matter since it was not experiencing a civil war although there was unrest in certain parts of the country. He had had the impression in speaking

to officials at the Soviet Foreign Ministry that there would be no objection to the submission of a report in March or July 1992 on those parts of the Union in which disturbances were currently taking place.

22. In the case of countries such as Kenya and Zaire, whose reports were long overdue, the Committee had already sent several reminders; it was not apparent to him how those reminders could be made any stronger.

23. Mr. LALLAH said that he had suggested Germany as the subject of a special report because consideration of conditions in the former German Democratic Republic was overdue as the Committee had been unable to consider that former country's report. He therefore continued to consider it appropriate for the Chairman to contact the German Government for the purpose.

24. He shared the view that Jamaica should not be asked to submit a special report since that might lead to confusion between the two instruments concerned and would create an unfair situation for a reporting State.

25. Noting that from 1983 onwards the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and the Islamic Republic of Iran had each received 16 reminders from the Committee, he agreed that the course of action to be taken by the Committee in the case of States that were so remiss in their reporting obligations should be a matter for debate. That was, however, as the Chairman had said, a separate issue from the circumstances under which a special report might be requested.

26. The choice of the reports to be considered at forthcoming sessions should perhaps be looked at in practical terms. There were reports pending from 12 States parties, only 2 of which could be considered at the next session could be considered at the next session. Two of the reports, from Byelorussia and Mongolia, had been received the previous year and in view of the changes taking place in those countries those States parties might wish to modify their reports. Time would be needed to ascertain through diplomatic channels whether that was the case. Two of the remaining 10 reports were initial reports. Since initial reports should be given priority in order to avoid subsequent problems with periodicity, he suggested that the reports from Algeria and the Republic of Korea should be the regular reports to be considered at the next session.

27. Despite the doubts expressed by many Committee members, he felt that a request should nevertheless be made to Yugoslavia for a special report. That would give the State party an opportunity to explain what its difficulties were.

28. Mr. MAVROMMATIS said he was concerned that in the process of seeking special reports the Committee was about to create another category of regular reporting. If such requests were made in cases that did not equal the gravity of the situation in Iraq the procedure would lose its impact and become another form of regular reporting. He concurred with the Chairman's view that it would not be appropriate to request a special report from the Islamic Republic of Iran. He further agreed that an informal approach to Germany through the Chairman explaining why the Committee would like a special report

would be the best course to follow. He would not oppose a decision by the Committee to ask Yugoslavia for a special report but continued to doubt the usefulness of such action.

29. Mr. ANDO said that as a member of the Bureau he would refrain from commenting on which States parties might be asked for special reports, but would instead address the principles that should guide the Committee's decision on the course of action to take.

30. As a general principle, the Committee should retain the pattern of periodicity it had adopted and followed for so many years. However, since second and third periodic reports from many States parties were considerably overdue, the existence of an emergency situation in such a State could provide grounds for the Committee to request a special report. Those could be the criteria Mr. Sadi sought and would allay Mr. Mavrommatis' concerns on the subject.

31. The whole issue turned on the purpose and procedure of the examination carried out by the Committee. Perhaps it was time to reconsider the approach to third periodic reports; the general constitutional framework of a State might be left aside and emphasis placed instead on the particular articles of the Covenant compliance with which were known to cause problems in the State concerned. If the Committee wished to consider a given emergency situation or a particular human rights violation in a given State party, then thought would need to be given to the procedures involved. In such cases one, or at most two, meetings would suffice for the purpose.

32. However, until the Committee had completed a wide-ranging review of the reporting process it should act with caution. He therefore considered that the only special reports the Committee should request at present were those that met the criteria that had applied in the case of Iraq - namely, the fact that a report was considerably overdue and the existence of a universally recognized emergency situation.

33. Mr. FODOR concurred with Mr. Mavrommatis that the Committee should not embark on a dual approach to the consideration of reports from States parties. Special reports should thus be considered an exception. There was a long list of States parties waiting for their reports to be considered, and that procedure would take approximately one year. Additional reports should therefore not be requested unless a widely recognized and genuine emergency made them particularly necessary.

34. The question of special reports on emergency situations had arisen in the Committee 10 years previously during the Polish crisis, but on that occasion the Committee had been unable to agree to request a special report from the State party. On the other hand, the Committee had been successful in coming to an understanding on the approach to be taken to Iraq; that made it clear that the Committee should limit its recourse to special reports to the most severe and urgent cases.

35. As to the particular country which might be asked to submit a special report to the next session, he considered Yugoslavia an appropriate choice since its report was three years overdue and there was an emergency situation

in the country. It was for the Government of Yugoslavia to inform the Committee whether it would be able to submit a report and attend the session at the time indicated. An immediate decision by the Committee as to which State party should be called on to submit a special report to its July 1992 session would give that State party, which he considered should be the Islamic Republic of Iran, more time to prepare its report.

36. The CHAIRMAN, summing up the discussion, said there appeared to be an emerging consensus that he should invite the German Government to submit a report by 1993, and that the Committee should indicate its concern about the emergency situation in Yugoslavia in a request to that Government that a report be submitted, bearing in mind the advisability of using such a procedure only in cases where a delayed submission was combined with an emergency situation. He, personally, was not in favour of deciding at the current session on reports to be submitted on the basis of that procedure for July 1992, because it implied a contradiction in terms and emergencies could only be considered on a case-by-case basis as and when they arose.

37. As far as Germany was concerned, therefore, he suggested that he should send a letter requesting that a report should be submitted on the situation in the five new Länder by 1993.

38. It was so decided.

39. The CHAIRMAN further suggested that in the case of Yugoslavia, the preambular part of the Committee's communication should be similar to that sent to Iraq: in the operative part, however, the Committee would have to decide which specific articles of the Covenant were of particular concern.

40. Mr. PRADO VALLEJO suggested that the Committee might be able to consider a report by Haiti at the July 1992 session, as Haiti's initial report would be due shortly before that. In view of the very difficult situation in that country at the present time, it might be useful for the Committee to emphasize the need for the Haitian Government to fulfil its reporting obligations under the Covenant.

41. The CHAIRMAN noted that there was a certain legal problem involved in that suggestion: until 5 May 1992, when Haiti's initial report fell due, the Committee had no power to take action in view of the provisions of article 40 (1) (a) of the Covenant. The situation of Haiti would therefore best be left until March 1992, when a reminder might be sent if the Haiti report had not arrived on time, accompanied by an indication that the Committee would like to discuss the report in July 1992.

42. It was so decided.

43. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to take a decision on the case of Yugoslavia.

44. Mr. DIMITRIJEVIC said that while he agreed with the Chairman's earlier suggestion, he felt that the operative part of the communication should not refer to any particular articles of the Covenant. It was very difficult at

the present time to determine which articles were of primary importance. The Committee would have an opportunity during its consideration of the report to concentrate on certain articles, in the light of the situation prevailing at the time.

45. Mr. MAVROMMATIS said that he was not in favour of offering the country an opportunity to present a report in summary form because to do so would introduce an entirely new notion of reporting.

46. The CHAIRMAN suggested, in the light of those views, that the preambular part of the communication should be the same as for Iraq and that a broad reference should be make to the Covenant in the operative part. He further suggested that the deadline for the report's submission should be set at 31 January 1992.

47. It was so decided.

48. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to decide next on the submission of reports by Madagascar and Morocco.

49. Madagascar's third periodic report had been due on 3 August 1988 and was now more than three years late. As its second periodic report had been considered in July 1991, he suggested that the third periodic report should be requested for 31 July 1992, and that a similar procedure should be followed for Morocco, by requesting submission of its third periodic report by 31 December 1992.

50. It was so decided.

51. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee next had to decide on the reports to be considered in March 1992 in New York. The Bureau had proposed the initial reports of Algeria, the Republic of Korea and the Niger: the latter might prefer to have its report considered in New York, where it had a Permanent Mission. Burundi, on the other hand, had requested that its initial report should be taken up in Geneva, and consideration of that report would therefore best be postponed until July 1992. The Bureau had further suggested that Colombia's third periodic report, Belgium's second periodic report and Peru's second periodic report should also be taken up in March. The other reports pending were those of Byelorussia and Mongolia, which had been submitted in 1990 and could not be considered until 1992, a situation which was unfortunate given that the countries concerned sought the assistance of the Committee in legislative matters following the changes in their internal situation. Mongolia had specifically requested that its report should be considered at Geneva in order that it could be presented by a high-level delegation. Byelorussia, on the other hand, might agree to present its report in New York. He therefore suggested that the most appropriate course of action would be to approve the Bureau's suggestions while asking Byelorussia whether or not it wished to present its report in New York. In the affirmative case, Belgium's second periodic report could be kept in reserve, together with the second periodic report of Guinea and the third periodic report of Uruguay in that order.

52. It was so decided.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 40 OF THE COVENANT (agenda item 4) (continued)

53. Mr. WENNERGREN (Chairman/Rapporteur of the Working Group under Article 40) reminded the Committee that at its fortieth session, the Working Group had produced a paper recommending certain changes in some of the Committee's procedures and that it had been decided to defer consideration of the recommendations relating to the implementation of article 40 (4) to a later session. The outstanding recommendations concerned concluding observations, an authoritative statement by the Committee reflecting its observations and the more timely dispatch of its concluding observations to States parties, the transmission of reports to individual States parties conveying the Committee's views on the implementation of the provisions of the Covenant by the State party concerned, and a further recommendation that after consideration of a State party's third periodic report a study might be prepared on the progress achieved by the State party and on continuing shortcomings, as a means of providing guidance for the country concerned. The Working Group had also recommended that that study should be made by a member of the Committee designated as a "country rapporteur", and be approved first by the Working Group and then by the Committee itself before being transmitted to the State party. He drew attention to a sample study on Tunisia as an example of the way in which such a report might be formulated.

54. At the Committee's current session, the Working Group had examined all the material available including the sample study by the secretariat and had decided that it would not be expedient to add further comments on the outstanding paragraphs from its earlier paper before the Committee had had an opportunity to consider them.

55. The Working Group had noted with interest that the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Committee against Torture had recently adopted new procedures whereby concluding observations would be formulated by each committee as a whole at the end of its consideration of each State party report, and the Working Group had requested the secretariat to inform the Committee in detail of those developments. The Working Group had also discussed different alternatives with regard to the formulation of concluding observations both by Committee members individually and by the Committee as a whole.

56. Mr. SADI said that the weakest aspect in the Committee's work was its inability to provide written comments for the benefit of the States parties which appeared before it. He knew from personal experience that States parties expected more than the comments of individual members of the Committee given in the course of a meeting. Furthermore, article 40 (4) contained a provision for the transmission of the Committee's reports and general comments to the States parties, and the time had come for the Committee to decide in what way it could provide such information as a means of guidance.

57. Mr. DIMITRIJEVIC said it was unfortunate that the Committee's heavy workload had meant that the important question under consideration had tended to be left in the air. The point raised by Mr. Sadi was highly important. Despite the clear directive given in article 40 of the Covenant, the Committee had so far presented no coherent view either as to the State party's report

and the performance of the delegation concerned or as to the true facts of the situation in the country compared with that described in the report. In its general comments, the Committee had concentrated on issues common to all reports in order not to offend any particular State party. He agreed with Mr. Sadi that it was important to show the view of the Committee as a whole. Some improvement had been made by devoting more time to the concluding observations of members, but those observations did not reflect the position of the Committee as such. One recommendation had been that, following the submission of three periodic reports by a particular State party, a study should be prepared on the progress achieved by that State party in the implementation of the Covenant. However, he felt that it would be preferable, following the consideration of each report and the concluding observations, for the secretariat and a member of the Committee acting as country rapporteur to produce a general comment showing the Committee's views on the most important issues, for examination at the next session, with members being free to send in additional comments during the intervening period. Although the procedures of other human rights bodies might well be interesting, the Committee could not use them as an example since its mandate under the Covenant was much broader than theirs.

58. Mr. MYULLERSON said that the questions to which Mr. Sadi and Mr. Dimitrijevic had drawn attention were extremely important. States parties would react much more seriously if they knew that the views expressed were those of the Committee as a whole.

59. A considerable amount of time was wasted during the consideration of second, and particularly third, periodic reports. While it was useful to question delegations as to the place of the Covenant in domestic legislation during the consideration of initial reports, or even during the consideration of the second report if there were any serious problems, that did not appear necessary in the case of subsequent reports. The lists of issues could be shortened by omitting such unnecessary questions, thus leaving more time to deal with other matters, including the preparation of general comments on country reports.

60. Mr. PRADO VALLEJO said that he entirely shared Mr. Sadi's views on the important point at issue. The Committee was obliged under article 40 of the Covenant to transmit its comments to States parties following its consideration of their reports, and it had not so far fulfilled that requirement. That could best be done following the consideration of the third periodic report. States parties had so far been informed only of the individual views of the various members of the Committee and not of the general view of the Committee as a whole. Preparation of the general comments required under article 40 would, of course, take time. The appointment of a country rapporteur, as suggested by the Working Group, would be the best solution. Such a rapporteur, who might be a member of the Committee from the region in question, should submit his report to the Working Group, to which members of the Committee could send their comments in writing between sessions. The Working Group could then prepare a text for adoption by the Committee.

61. Mr. EL SHAFEI said that the question under consideration had been touched upon in various working group and plenary meetings in the past. Under rule 70

of the Committee's rules of procedure, it was only when the Committee found that the State party had not discharged its obligations under the Covenant that it might make such general comments as it might consider appropriate. The Committee's report to the General Assembly contained a number of paragraphs referring to the observations of members of the Committee on the reports of particular States parties. If such observations were not considered as representing the position of the Committee itself, it was difficult to see how a few members of the Committee in the Working Group could produce a report showing the Committee's reaction. It was not true to say that the State party could not know that reaction without such a report. Comments had been made at length throughout the consideration of all country reports, and particularly in the concluding observations on them. Agreement could never be reached on a study made by just a few members of the Committee and it would be a waste of time to enter into such an exercise. The reports submitted to the General Assembly showed precisely what the Committee's feeling on each State party report was. They were widely read, particularly by members of the Third Committee, and followed a practice that the General Assembly had accepted.

62. Mr. SADI said that a State party could not regard the observations of an individual member as the views of the Committee as a whole. Article 40 (4) of the Covenant specifically called on the Committee to make general comments following the consideration of State party reports, and the Committee was obliged to fulfil that requirement. There was very little difference of opinion in the Committee on such reports, and it should not be difficult to reach a consensus on a text that would represent the Committee's comments.

63. He had been in favour of carrying out the exercise immediately following the consideration of a particular report, since the information would be fresh in the minds of members of the Committee, but the summary records would be available to show what had transpired and it might be useful to follow Mr. Prado Vallejo's suggestion that a country rapporteur and the Working Group should produce a text at a later stage. It should not take more than an hour or so for the Committee to complete the exercise. In any event, the Committee was obliged to provide the State party with some guidance.

64. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee might give some consideration to the various options before it. One course would be to continue as at present to have a section on concluding observations in the past of its annual report relating to a periodic report by a particular State party. It had been suggested that the heading should be amended to read "Concluding observations of the Committee". Another option would be for the Committee's comments to be incorporated in a paper to be considered either immediately or at the following session. The Committee might think about those options before its next meeting on the subject.

65. Mr. EL SHAFEI suggested that the section concerned should begin: "The following concerns have been mentioned by the Committee:" and that the concerns should then be listed.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.